On January 1st 2019, Montana’s minimum wage increased to $8.50 from the former minimum wage of $8.30, which is $1.25 higher than the national minimum wage of $7.25. Montana’s minimum wage increases annually to adjust for inflation based on the national Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers.
Although the 2019 minimum wage of $8.50 per hour is a historic high in nominal terms, the purchasing power of the minimum wage in real terms peaked in 1968 when it was equivalent to $11.55 in 2018 dollars. The nominal minimum wage in 1968 was $1.60 for both the state and nation.
A large majority of Montana’s minimum wage workers are concentrated in the service sectors. The accommodation and food services sector accounts for the largest share, employing 42% of Montana’s minimum wage workers. The retail sector makes up the second largest share at 17%.

The industries employing the smallest share of Montana’s minimum wage workers were the utilities sector and mining sector, each of which accounted for about a tenth of a percent of minimum wage workers.
In 2017, approximately 3,899 people employed in Montana (or about 0.9% of the workforce) were earning the current minimum wage ($8.30) or less. Most of the workers affected by the minimum wage were employed in service-related occupations. For example, of the 8,538 waiters and waitresses in Montana, approximately 4.1% were earning $8.30 or less.